

WEST MAIN STREET MEETING NOTES - NOVEMBER 20, 2008



On November 20, 2008, City of Auburn staff met with residents of the NW Main St. Neighborhood at West Auburn High School to discuss their concerns about speeding and parking enforcement in their neighborhood.

Staff in Attendance: MAYOR PETE LEWIS, COMMUNITY SERVICES MANAGER DUANNA RICHARDS, ASST. POLICE CHIEF LARRY MILLER, SGT. HANS KRENZ, EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS CERT COORDINATOR REBECCA ADAMS, TRANSPORTATION PLANNER TIFFIN GOODMAN AND CULTURAL DIVERSITY LIAISON ALEXANDRA DAVIS

Community Members in Attendance: ASST. SUPERINTENDENT FOR K-12 STUDENT LEARNING ROD LUKE, ARETHA NGUYEN, CHARLEEN SHAW, CHRIS WERNER, DARREN JONES, ED WILLIAMS, JASON O'BRYAN, KEITH JONES, MARILYN DOLLINGER, PATTY SHERMAN, PETER VUKSHICH, PHIL, MICKY & MATT GOMES, RICHARD SHAW, STEVE & TINIA TURNER, TAMMY GARY, YERUA & MIKE NELSON AND ZAK GREEN

Announcements

Mayor Pete Lewis facilitated the meeting and discussed the following:

- ***Mayor's Update*** -- residents were encouraged to sign up for the Mayor's Update, an e-newsletter Mayor Lewis sends out every Friday about what's taken place in the City during the week, upcoming events, etc. He also uses the listserv to send out alerts about road closures, emergencies, etc. as a way to keep the community informed. Since this is a listserv, if you decide you don't want to continue receiving it you can unsubscribe at any time.

General Questions/Comments

- ***What is the open lot on Main Street going to be used for?***
Mayor Lewis talked about six different blocks that have planned development activity. The City has assembled 26 parcels in the downtown area to promote development. One block is owned by the Auburn Regional Hospital, where they have started building a parking garage and a 40,000 square foot oncology center. Another block, also known as the tavern block, has been demolished to make way for an Annex Building. There are plans to transform the block where Marvel Foods is located into a five story building with a mixed use focus. The SE blocks which are owned by the City will be built out in spring of 2010. The open lot on Main Street, including the two-story structure behind it (the Cavanaugh block), is currently on the market at \$7.4 million; when it does sell the City has intentions to work extensively with the developer to ensure whatever gets built there ties in with the surrounding plans.
- ***Is there anything that can be done about trash pick up at the school happening at 11:30 p.m.?***
The School District will check with Waste Management on this.
- ***Is there a City Council person for this particular neighborhood?***
No, all our City Councilmembers are in at large positions.

Parking/Traffic Related Questions/Comments

- ***We are having an issue with commuter parking spilling into our neighborhood. Is parking going to be expanded at the train station?***
Sound Transit is adding more trains and the City can't restrict their movements. Sound Transit has always intended that build another 450-stall parking garage on the C Street side of the railroad

tracks; with the passage of their ballot measure last Fall, it might actually happen sometime in the future. Another Sound Transit garage has been proposed for Sumner that would be located at the bottom of Lake Tapps Parkway; if so, that would also take pressure off Auburn's downtown parking garage. The Mayor encouraged residents to contact Sound Transit directly by calling them at 206-398-5000 or 1-800-201-4900 or emailing them at main@soundtransit.org to voice their concerns and ideas.

Also, the City of Auburn has partnered with Sound Transit and Pierce County Transit to establish a shuttle service between Lakeland Hills and the Transit Center beginning February 9, 2009. The Lea Hill area will follow if the Lakeland Hills shuttle is successful.

King County Metro has also talked to the City about a project that would add more parking downtown.

- ***Is it true there are 100 parking spaces not being used in the parking garage?***

A majority of the downtown businesses own these spaces because they paid for them when the garage was built. The City asked if some of them could be leased back to rent out to commuters and that's currently being done. The City also added some additional surface parking areas commuters can use.

- ***Currently, "no parking" signs are posted along the area off A Street; what about opening it up for commuters? What about using the other side of the baseball field on the north side of West Auburn High School on 2nd Street for commuter parking?***

The Mayor responded this was a good idea, it could temporarily help with the commuter parking issues. City staff will determine who owns the land behind West Auburn High School and check into this option.

- ***Is it possible to create some sort of residential parking zone for this neighborhood?***

Mayor Lewis asked what everyone thought about issuing permits for the neighborhood. If the City did implement something like this, we would need input regarding the number of permits to issue per household, the most equitable way to issue the permits, if there should be a fee for the permits or not, etc.

A resident suggested the number of permits per household could be based on the number of registered vehicles they own; residents could show a copy of their vehicle registration to the Permit Center in City Hall to obtain a permit.

- ***The City of Seattle handles the two sides of some residential streets differently. Why don't we implement both 2-hour parking and permit parking for residents?***

One resident expressed their concern there is already not enough parking for the apartments on one side of the street. Another resident responded they never had this issue with parking before the transit users started parking in their neighborhood.

Someone suggested if there was residential permit parking on one side of the street that towing signs should be placed along that side. The Mayor responded towing signs can be placed on private property, but not on a City street.

One attendee said three-hour parking would be fine if the City also opened up parking on the north side of the baseball fields and implemented residential permit parking.

- ***How would a residential parking permit system affect guests that are visiting a resident for 24 hours or longer?***

The Mayor suggested the residents work it out with their visitors by parking their own cars with permits on the street and letting their guests park in the driveway.

- ***AgriShop reminded the City they need to have parking available for their clients and 19 employees.***

City staff responded that if a residential parking zone was implemented the City would put together some type of business zone. Someone suggested using a color code system for business versus residential. It was mentioned again that the issue is with the commuters not the residents or the business customers.

- ***What would the time frame be to implement a residential permit parking zone?***

The Mayor said it would take at least a couple of months to implement something like this. The City needs to put together a survey about establishing a residential permit parking zone and send it out to the residents to determine if the majority of the neighborhood agreed with implementing a system like this. The City would need to hear back from at least half of the entire Northwest Main Street neighborhood before any changes would be made. If the majority of the neighborhood approves it, the proposal would then need to be passed through the Council Committees and be approved by the City Council prior to implementation. Implementation would involve printing up the permits, having the staff in place and trained, and installing the signs, which is dependent upon the weather.

When asked if they were interested in moving ahead right away with posting two-hour or three-hour parking zone signs in the neighborhood, the residents said no.

- ***How can residents be sure the parking limits will be enforced?***

The City has two parking enforcement officers who would make sure it is enforced. The City also has volunteers working with the Police Department who assist with chalking on the tires.

- ***Does West Auburn High School have parking permits?***

Asst. Superintendent for K-12 Student Learning Rod Luke responded that they don't have permits.

- ***Why has the area around West Auburn High School never been posted as a school zone?***

The Mayor said prior to this year no one ever asked about it; the City will move forward with it now.

- ***Around 5:30 a.m. semi-trucks drive down D Street NW so fast it shakes the houses. Can a speed bump or a four-way stop be placed at 2nd St. NW and D St. NW to slow vehicles down?***

The City will look into adding a four-way stop at 2nd St. NW and D St. NW. The Mayor said the City would prefer to put in a stop sign on the corner to deal with the speeding issue before they consider putting in a speed bump. The general order of traffic calming measures is to use paint first, then speed limit signs, then stop signs, and then if still needed, speed bumps.

- ***Funding for the City's traffic calming program comes from PhotoSAFE.***

The money the City receives from the PhotoSAFE program has been put into a special fund to support neighborhood traffic calming.

The reason the City of Auburn implemented the PhotoSAFE program was to reduce or eliminate the number of T-bone accidents in intersections, which has definitely been accomplished. The City doesn't actually make much money from the tickets once the City pays the organization responsible for the system and pays for the additional Court staff needed to process the tickets. Council had decided to put the money the City does keep into a designated fund to help cover the cost of our neighborhood traffic calming program. The City will continue to add intersections to the PhotoSAFE program as they have the funds and supporting statistics to warrant doing so.

- ***Can the street sweepers come before the commuters start parking along the street?***

Right now we have more street miles for them to sweep and the routes haven't been adjusted yet so they can begin sweeping early in the morning again.

Police Related Questions/Comments

- ***Explanation of Auburn's 911 System***

Residents were encouraged to report everything to 911. We, the citizens of Auburn, own the 911 system. You should call 911 whenever you have an emergency, feel something suspicious is going on, need to speak with an officer or file a report. (An online reporting system is also available 24 hours a day at http://www.auburnwa.gov/police/online_reporting.asp if you would prefer to file your report that way.) PLEASE NOTE: If calling from a cell phone you need to ask for an "Auburn Call Receiver."

Auburn shares ownership of the 911 system with other South King County cities and the calls go to a dispatch center so residents shouldn't worry about tying up the phone line when making non-emergency calls. When you call 911 it will be answered by a "Call Receiver." The Call Receiver will determine whether or not your call is an emergency to be handled right away or to have an officer make contact with you to file a non-emergency report. They will ask questions which are specifically designed to obtain information so that the proper response can be made for your call.

If you want to know what the officer finds out be sure to let the Call Receiver know you DO want to be contacted by the officer when they've completed their investigation.

In addition to emergency issues, residents should also call 911 for non-emergency issues such as street lights out, stop lights out, missing stop signs, fireworks, loose dogs, sewer backups, water leaks, etc. An alternative is to report them via the City website. The link is under Online Services at the top of the page and is called Online Citizen Report (about half way down the list): http://www.auburnwa.gov/Business/Contracting_Consulting/Online_Citizen_Report.asp

- ***Overview of Police Department and Block Watch Program***

Sgt. Hans Krenz explained how the Auburn Police Department functions and gave a brief overview of how Block Watch works. It's built on the concept of neighbors watching out for each other because you know better than anyone else who belongs in your neighborhood and who doesn't. If you think "maybe I should call 911 about this," you should. Residents were encouraged to sign up if they were interested in setting up a Block Watch for their neighborhood.

- ***Overview of Emergency Preparedness Programs***

Emergency Preparedness CERT Coordinator Rebecca Adams gave an overview of several programs offered by the Emergency Management team, including Map Your Neighborhood, Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) and emergency preparedness classes. Map Your Neighborhood class helps residents know what resources are located right in their own back yards by mapping out individual's skills, useful equipment and special needs. The CERT class takes you through triage, disaster preparedness and cribbing. CERT is taught four times a year and is free. Emergency preparedness classes deal primarily with helping citizens prepare for earthquakes, flooding, power outages and snow. Ms. Adams recommended anyone interested in any or all of these programs to contact the Emergency Management team directly at 253-876-1925 or emergencyprep@auburnwa.gov.

Summary of Solutions Discussed/Action Items

- School District to check with Waste Management about picking up the trash at West Auburn High School earlier in the day.
- City staff will determine who owns the land behind West Auburn High School and if it can be used temporarily for commuter parking.
- City staff will meet with business owners (AgriShop and House of Vacuums) to determine best option for their parking needs, including possibly implementing two-hour parking on E Street SW from Main Street to 1st Street SW.
- City will consider installing a 4-way stop at 2nd St. NW and D St. NW.
- Install school zone signage around all four sides of West Auburn High School.

- Install truck zone signs on D Street NW.
- City to develop and send out survey to the West Main Street neighborhood about the parking permit proposal and report the results back to the neighborhood.

Community Services Team Contact Information:

- Duanna Richards, Community Services Manager, 253-931-3099 or drichards@auburnwa.gov
- Kirsten Reynolds, Community Services Project Assistant, 253-876-1964, or kreynolds@auburnwa.gov